

**BOARD OF REGENTS FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
MINUTES OF MEETING
AUGUST 14, 2003**

A meeting of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education was held at the Shepard Building - 255 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903 and convened at 5:10 p.m.

In Attendance:

J. DiPrete, J. Gaines, C. Callahan, M. Mancieri, G. Grove, and S. Duff.

Chairman's Remarks

- Chairman DiPrete announced the new committee assignments. A list is enclosed.
- Regent Guida has been reviewing the Regents appeal process and we met with the Board's attorney, Howard Haronian and Chief Legal Counsel, Jennifer Wood to discuss possible changes. A revised process is being drafted and will come before the Regents for consideration sometime in September.
- Attended a "LEAD" (leadership) conference with the Commissioner on July 31 - August 3rd on effective leadership.

Approval of Minutes

MOVED AND SECONDED: That, the minutes of the meetings of June 26, 2003 and Special Meeting of July 23, 2003 be approved as presented.

Approval of Times Square Charter School Renewal

RIDE staff member, Keith Oliveira reviewed the renewal process for the Times Square Charter School that included SALT reports and school visits. He reported that overall he had found a very positive educational climate in the school. Mr. Oliveira said that the last SALT report had found that the school lacked cohesion, so the school responded by creating an academic dean position that was subsequently filled by a former Principal of the Year who has provided focus and direction. Additionally, the school has implemented a new science framework. Student performance has begun to show great improvement - in fact the middle school students are ranked among the highest of Providence middle schools. The Director of Times Square, Ralph Taylor spoke to the Board about the school's programs, staff and new building addition.

MOVED AND SECONDED: THAT, the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education Approve the Renewal of the Times Square Charter School, as presented.

VOTE: Approved Unanimously.

Approval of Appeals

Howard Haronian, Attorney for the Board reviewed each case and decision in detail before the vote was taken.

- Daly vs. North Kingstown

MOVED AND SECONDED: THAT, the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education Approve the Motion to deny the Appellee's Motion to Dismiss the Appeal.

VOTE: Approved Unanimously.

- In the Matter of Student R.D. & D.W.

The group had an extensive discussion about whether the Commissioner's decision was appropriate or not in the language of the attached statement. Regents expressed their concern that this type of decision undermines school administrators in "keeping good order" in the schools, especially in regard to activities at the end of the school year. The Regents voted to uphold the Commissioner's decision in this case (because the case is moot at this point in time), however they wanted to go on record that hearing officers should "...give considerable weight to the concerns expressed by the administrators regarding the impact that decisions on these types of cases will have on the ability to enforce rules of conduct in the schools. We will not hesitate to overturn any future decisions in this sensitive area if we find it to be so lacking in consideration for those concerns as to be arbitrary and capricious".

MOVED AND SECONDED: THAT, the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education Approve the Motion to Affirm the Commissioner's Decision.

VOTE: Approved Unanimously.

- In the Matter of Student C.D.

MOVED AND SECONDED: THAT, the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education Approve the Motion to Affirm the Commissioner's Decision.

VOTE: Approved Unanimously.

Approval of FY '05 Capital Budget

Because all of the members of the Regents in attendance had also attended the joint meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee of the Regents, RIDE Director of Finance, Carolyn Dias gave an abbreviated review of the 2005 Capital Budget.

MOVED AND SECONDED: THAT, the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education Approve the Capital Budget, FY'05 – FY'09, as presented.

VOTE: Approved unanimously

Budget Update

Again, because all Regents had attended the earlier Finance/Personnel Committee Meeting, the Director of Finance did not report on the Budget.

Approval of Table of Organization

MOVED AND SECONDED: THAT, the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education Approve the Table of Organization, as Presented

VOTE: Approved Unanimously

Update on School Classification Notifications

Deputy Commissioner, Todd Flaherty briefly reviewed the timeline and process for releasing the 2003 school performance classifications to the districts, as enclosed. He talked about some of the changes this year in the identifications and reconfiguration of the system. The Department will host a series of workshops to walk any school/district through their results that request it.

Commissioner's Remarks

- Commissioner McWalters reported that Rhode Island would be getting a round II LEAP grant;
- He has been asked to lead a group of state commissioner's to China for an education focused visit;
- Schools are getting ready to open - East Providence is delayed because of a problem with air quality and asbestos in the middle school;
- Department staffing is going well - the Certification office is managing to catch up with the backlog and district superintendents are cooperating. The office of Teacher Certification will be closing on Fridays so that they can process paper more efficiently;
- RFP's for I-Plans will go out this month so that all new teachers will be on I-Plans;
- The Reading First grant has been resubmitted for federal funding.

Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Adjournment

With unanimous consent the meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.